

Americans Storm Ashore on Palau and Halmahera In Great Twin Offensive to Open Philippine Door

MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

United Press—Full Leased Wire

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WEST WALL CRUMBLES

Head-On Rail Wreck Kills 25, Injures 64



At least 25 persons were killed, 64 injured, in this wreck of the crack Dixie Flyer near Terre Haute, Ind., after it crashed head-on into a mail train while running at high speed through a heavy fog. Most of the casualties were soldiers, riding in the fast train bound from Chicago to Miami.

YANKEES DRIVE 10-MILE WEDGE IN SIEGFRIED LINE

Rampant Forces Capture
Maastricht, Race to Finish
Encircling of Aachen Base

Supreme Headquarters, AEF, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—Lt. Gen. Courtney H. Hodges' American 1st army surrounded Aachen today and to the east drove the tip of a wedge more than 10 miles deep into the Siegfried line.

A dispatch from 1st army headquarters tonight said the vaunted westwall was crumbling under trip-hammer blows, was "proving obsolete" and was a much less formidable barrier than the Atlantic wall.

Maastricht Taken
Rampant American mobile forces captured the great Dutch fortress city of Maastricht and raced eastward into Germany to complete the encirclement of Aachen, the fall of which was expected soon.

Far to the south the American 3rd army captured Nancy, biggest transport and military hub in northeastern France, and opened the battle for the companion fortress of Metz, marked for early liberation from the Nazis.

The right wing of the 3rd army overran Maricourt and Epinal. Epinal is 40 miles south of Nancy, on the west bank of the Moselle. Its occupation represented the farthest push up the river so far, carrying within a little more than 50 miles of the upper Rhine in the Freiburg area.

Thionville Falls
The Allied controlled Paris radio reported that the Americans captured Thionville on the Moselle 12 miles from the German-French-Luxembourg border junction.

The 10-mile penetration of the Siegfried line was made east of Aachen. An American spearhead was driven beyond the big industrial town of Stolberg, due east of Aachen. Stolberg was bypassed or captured. The front dispatch did not say which.

"American elements are across the frontier all along the Belgium and Luxembourg border," the dispatch reported, "and from the southern tip of Luxembourg to the appendix of Holland are encountering slightly stiffening resistance."

1st army headquarters sources reported that the German troops facing the Americans are of poor quality. In the Aachen sector some prisoners had been in the army only two weeks. Some still had open wounds.

Hodgepodge Defense
"It is a heterogeneous hodgepodge of men manning the Siegfried line, particularly at the center of the 1st army front," the headquarters dispatch said, "quoting a high officer as saying: 'We have seen everything but Hitler's maidens.'"

Additionally, the Siegfried line was caught in a state of disrepair and undermanned.

EXPLOSION HEARD
125 MILES AWAY

Hastings, Neb., Sept. 15—(U.P.)—An explosion heard 125 miles away blasted a loading dock of the Hastings naval ordnance depot today.

Four Negro soldiers were known killed and at least 21 other persons were injured.

The blast occurred at the south transfer depot at a loading building for box cars—five miles east and south of the scene of an explosion in April which killed eight persons.

The blast was heard at McCook, 125 miles from Hastings, and at Jamestown, Kan., 100 miles away.

Siegfried Line Totters



U. S. Armies crushed outer segments of Siegfried Line on 85-mile front, from north of Aachen to well south of Trier as headquarters sources indicated Nazis may be pulling out of their West Wall to new fortified belt on the Rhine. Below Trier, Gen. Patton's Third Army poured tanks, guns and men across Moselle River to join in assault on Nazi homeland.

Germans and Finns Battle; 9 Nazi Invasion Ships Sunk

Stockholm, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—War between German and Finnish troops, actual if undeclared, was reported today to have broken out in northern Finland and on an island off the south coast.

A Finnish communiqué said a German amphibious force attacked the island of Suursaari (Hogland) in the Gulf of Finland last night. Fighting was in progress on the island today, it said, after the Nazis established a small bridgehead despite the sinking of nine of their invasion ships.

Reliable sources later reported that fighting had broken out between the Germans and Finns in northern Finland. Three German divisions in the Salla area were reported partly enveloped by Russian troops.

The incident occurred on the eve of the expiration of the period Finland gave Germany to remove Nazi troops from Finnish territory. Under terms of the armistice Finland got from Russia, the Germans were to be out of Finland by today.

Nazi Bigwigs and Gestapo Leaders Flee Aachen Area
Kornelystun, Germany (Southeast of Aachen), Sept. 15—(U.P.)—The Nazi bigwigs, including Gestapo leaders, fled this section of the Rhineland some days ago.

They knew the worth of the Siegfried line, and they realized the Third Reich was on its last legs.

They left in a hurry, abandoning their luxurious homes as soon as the fire of the U. S. long tons became audible. In most cases they did not even bother to salvage their wardrobes or silver and gold plate.

HONEY CROP SHORT
Sacramento, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—California's honey crop this year will be "exceedingly short," the state department of agriculture reported today.

Roosevelt and Churchill May Continue Pow wow

Quebec, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—Official spokesmen of the Roosevelt-Churchill war talks announced today that the conference here has moved into its closing stages, but indicated that the president and the prime minister might continue their discussions elsewhere.

White House Press Secretary Stephen T. Early said that the president and the prime minister will finish their work by noon tomorrow, and as an afterthought he added that that would "conclude their conferences in Quebec."

Shattering Bombardments Prepare Way For Landings On Japanese-Held Islands

Pearl Harbor, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—A big American invasion armada poured fighting men ashore on the Japanese island base of Palau, 560 miles west of the Philippines, today as Gen. Douglas MacArthur's troops stormed up into the Halmahera islands from the south in a twin offensive to clear the road back to Bataan and Corregidor.

Exploding their greatest combined offensive of the Pacific war, MacArthur and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander-in-chief of the U. S. Pacific fleet, breached the coastal defenses of the two island bastions under cover of shattering bombardments from sea and sky.

250 MILES FROM PHILIPPINES

MacArthur led his troops ashore early Friday on Morotai island, northernmost of the Halmaheras and only 250 miles south of the Philippines, at almost the same moment Nimitz' marines and army assault units were battling across the beaches of Palau.

(Because of time differentials, Nimitz' announcement said the Palau landing occurred Thursday morning, Honolulu time, which would be Friday morning Halmahera time.)

The twin invasion blow threatened to break the chain of sprawling island bases established by the Japanese around the Philippines and the western and southern approaches to the Chinese mainland, and first reports from Palau said the enemy was fighting back furiously from long-prepared defenses.

American battleships, cruisers and supporting warships of the Pacific fleet stood offshore bombarding the Japanese shore installations while carrier-based aircraft dive-bombed and strafed the enemy in close support of the advancing ground troops.

"Enemy defenses are being heavily bombed and shelled at close range," the communiqué said.

FEEBLE RESISTANCE ON MOROTAI

MacArthur's men on Morotai also went in under a powerful warship and aircraft screen, but their landing met only feeble Japanese opposition and casualties in the initial assault were described officially as "very light."

The bulk of the Japanese garrison in the Halmaheras were revealed to have been concentrated in the southern part of the island group in the belief that MacArthur would strike there. Instead, they were by-passed, cut off from their only direct sources of supply, and left to surrender or die.

On Palau, however, one of the toughest battles of the Pacific campaign was believed in progress, possibly exceeding in savagery the epic fight for Saipan or the marine landing on Tarawa.

The troops who swarmed ashore had to overcome obstacles of barbed wire on the beaches, backed up by entrenched machine gun positions. Further inland were larger guns, probably ranging up to six inches, and the deadly mortars which caused heavy casualties on the Marianas beachheads.

TRANSPORTS LANDING REINFORCEMENTS

A brief navy communiqué said reinforcements were being put ashore from a host of transports guarded by the guns and planes of Admiral William F. Halsey's third fleet, and that the landings were "continuing against stiff ground opposition."

The reference to "ground" opposition indicated that the bulk of Palau's aerial defenses had been smashed by Halsey's task force in a series of softening up bombardments that began on Sept. 5, and continued almost without interruption until the zero hour.

(The exact point of the landing was not disclosed, but radio Tokyo said the attack centered on Peleliu island, southernmost of the chain of atolls comprising the Palau group. Tokyo said the landing was made at 6 a. m. (Palau time) and that the Japanese garrison drove the Americans back into the sea after a two-hour battle.)

("About 2,500" American dead were left on the beach, the broadcast said.)

The language of the Pearl Harbor communiqué left little doubt that the Japanese would make a desperate attempt to hold Palau, probably their most important bastion in the central Pacific, outranking even Truk, 1150 miles to the west.

NO AERIAL OPPOSITION MENTIONED

There was no mention of Japanese opposition in the air, although there was a possibility that the enemy might risk units of their grand fleet in an attempt to run carrier aircraft to the aid of their island garrisons.

Any such move, however, would almost certainly bring on a major battle of surface ships, for which Halsey undoubtedly is well prepared. The size of the supporting battle fleet covering the Palau landing was not divulged, but it was known to include some of the navy's heaviest units.

The landing followed more than a week of widespread naval and air assaults by Halsey's battlewagons and carriers against Japanese positions on Palau and in the central Philippines that cost the enemy 501 planes and scores of merchant vessels.

American occupation of the Palau would close a watery trap around 75,000 to 100,000 Japanese troops now by-passed in the western Carolines, including the once-formidable naval base at Truk.

In addition, it would remove the last island barrier astride the central Pacific route to the Philippines and enable Nimitz to throw the full weight of his land, sea and air forces against the Japanese-occupied islands.

Democratic Women To Organize Club At Monday Meeting

A Woman's Jackson County Democratic club will be organized at a meeting to be held Monday, Sept. 18 at the Medford Hotel, Mrs. John Peter, vice-chairman of the Democratic central committee for the county announced today. The meeting has been called for 7:30 p. m.

Mrs. Peter stated that all women, regardless of their party affiliation, who are interested in the reelection of President Roosevelt are invited to attend the meeting. "This is a rally call," she stated, "and a full attendance is urged."

Lola Lane Granted Divorce From Third

Hollywood, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—Lola Lane, of the five film sisters, today received an interlocutory divorce decree from her third husband, Henry Dunham, Douglas Aircraft employee whom she said suggested it would be good if we took a vacation from each other.

They were married Jan. 6, 1941.

GOLD MINES GIVEN GET-READY SIGNAL

Washington, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—The war production board today authorized gold mining firms to obtain materials and equipment which will enable them to resume war-halted operations immediately after the defeat of Germany.

WPB emphasized that its action does not allow reopening of gold mines for the production of mining of ore but merely allows putting the mines and equipment in shape preparatory to reopening.

STOLEN BAKERY TRUCK
ABANDONED NEAR CAMP
A large Fluhrer's bakery truck was recovered last night about 10:28 o'clock on Hilton road just off Crater Lake highway where it had been abandoned. The truck was taken from the front of Fluhrer's bakery on Holly street about 9:30 p. m., state police stated.

HURRICANE DIES AFTER TAKING 18 LIVES ON COAST

Boston, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—The tropical hurricane which battered 900 miles of the Atlantic coast, littered a half dozen big cities and 11 states with debris, took 18 lives, and caused damage estimated at \$30,000,000, was expiring today somewhere off the coast of Nova Scotia.

The famous resort, Atlantic City, N. J., was worst hit but the east's three principal coastal cities, New York, Philadelphia, and Boston were lashed by high winds. New York had the greatest loss of life—12. Norfolk, Va., New London, Conn., Providence and Nantucket, R. I., and Brockton, Mass., were other cities in the storm's path.

A United Press compilation showed that approximately 150 persons had been injured seriously enough for hospitalization.

The long series of weather bureau advisories which had charted the hurricane's erratic course from the Caribbean ended at 7 a. m. when the Boston bureau announced that it was then centered off Bar Harbor, Me., would soon pass out of its jurisdiction, and there would be no further advisories. At that time its force had diminished considerably. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia the Canadian provinces jutting northeastward from Maine, reported only strong winds.

TO BERLIN

By United Press

The nearest distances to Berlin from advanced allied lines today:

Western front—305 miles (from point east of Aachen. Gain of 50 miles in week.)

Russia—320 miles (from Praga. Gain of eight miles in week.)

Southern France—423 miles (from point near Belfort. Gain of 40 miles in week.)

Italy—553 miles (from point north of Florence. Gain of two miles in week.)

SIDE GLANCES

By TRIBUNE REPORTERS

Marion McCabe afraid that her son would be going to school "Okie" fashion if the footwear situation didn't improve.

W. P. (Tuck) Tucker explaining the new filing system which he worked out for justice court records to an interested taxpayer.

Art Cannon getting set for another annual appeal to community chest donors.

Twisted Wreckage, Army Ribbons Mark Scene of Head-On Smashup

Terre Haute, Ind., Sept. 15—(U.P.)—A twisted mass of wreckage, still sprinkled with campaign ribbons and the personal effects of army air force personnel, today marked the spot where 32 persons died in the head-on collision between the Chicago and Eastern Illinois railroad's luxurious Chicago-Miami Express and a northbound mail train north of Terre Haute early yesterday.

Twenty-nine of the dead were army airmen, many of them veterans of the Italian campaign, and the remainder were train crewmen, the chief dispatcher of the railroad at Danville, Ill., reported.

Railroad officials said the wreck occurred when the engineer of the Dixie Flyer, Frank Blair, 52, Farmersburg, Ind., apparently failed to see block signals in the heavy fog.

BRITISH 8TH NEAR RIMINI AIRFIELD

Rome, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—British 8th army troops driving through the Gothic line towards the southern approaches of the Po valley captured the town of Coriano and an adjoining 7,000-yard long ridge today and drove to within a mile of the Rimini airfield on the Adriatic coast.

British and Indian troops cleared and occupied the town of Coriano, four miles inland and five and one-half miles south of Rimini, and took the long-contested ridge extending from Coriano to San Savino.

The United States 5th army continued its advance north of Lucca and Pistoia on the western end of the front, capturing Mount Catino and Ponte Di Moriano, both four miles north of Lucca, and the Pietrabuona feature on a strategic road leading through the mountain mass midway between Lucca and Pistoia.

Infected Guineas Soon Rounded Up

Berkeley, Calif., Sept. 15—(U.P.)—Four of the eight tetanus-toxin infected guinea pigs stolen from the test barn of the Cutter laboratories Wednesday night were back in their cage today and police were rounding up the remainder from the seven-to-nine year old boys who raided the laboratory.

A. K. Beckley, Cutter's production manager, told police a person might become infected with tetanus merely by touching one of the pigs, which was being used for experimentation.

THREE FLIERS KILLED

Tucson, Ariz., Sept. 15—(U.P.)—Three army fliers were killed last night when their B24 Liberator bomber crashed six miles south of nearby Davis-Monthan field, their home base. They were 2nd Lt. Chester L. Welenc, 20, the pilot, of Greenfield, Mass.; Flight Officer Stephen P. Pedone, 21, co-pilot, West Chester, N. Y.; and S. Sgt. Nick H. Outten, 30, aerial engineer, of Akron, O.

RETURN TO 1942 PRICES IS HOPE

Washington, Sept. 15—(U.P.)—Price Administrator Chester Bowles said today that the office of price administration "hoped" 1942 prices could be applied to civilian goods returning to production under present reconversion plans.

He told a news conference he had "reason to be optimistic," following his recent tour of the country, that when goods which have been out of production because of the war return to civilian markets, they will be available at the price level of two years ago when their manufacture was stopped.

"In some places this will be impossible because of wage and material increases," he said, adding that he was "hopeful that industry will, of its own free will, announce their prices will be '42 prices.'"

Trummelbach falls in Switzerland are 950 feet in height.